

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

January 21, 2009

The Honorable Daniel Inouye  
Chairman, Appropriations Committee  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Thad Cochran  
Ranking Member, Appropriations Committee  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Inouye and Ranking Member Cochran:

We are writing to stress the need for water infrastructure funding in the economic stimulus bill.

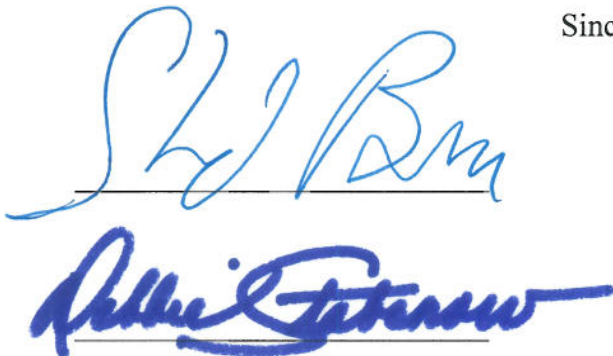
With numerous reports detailing the expanding funding gap in water infrastructure needs, it is clear that these are investments that we can no longer ignore. In addition to strengthening the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (SRF), we believe that there is also a serious need for a dedicated \$5 billion combined sewage overflow (CSO) grant program.

Over the next twenty years, the Environmental Protection Agency projects the necessary nationwide investment in combined sewage overflows at over \$50 billion. These projects represent more than 25% of all wastewater needs reported in the most recent EPA needs survey.

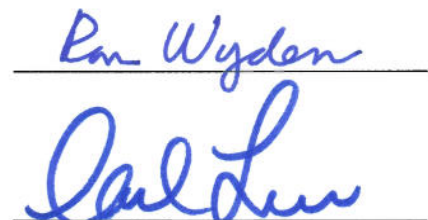
But under the Clean Water Act SRF program, CSO projects compete with all other types of eligible projects for funding. The SRF program is already stretched to meet the competing needs for CSO and many other types of eligible wastewater projects. As a result, nearly one billion gallons of raw sewage from CSOs puts the public health at risk and undermines our commitment to environmental quality.

There are communities across the country with shovel-ready projects that would benefit tremendously from this program. Making these investments now will create jobs, ensure long-term economic competitiveness, affirm our commitment to clean water, and help shield ratepayers from rapidly increasing costs. We strongly urge you to include this important program in the economic recovery legislation.

Sincerely,



Shelley Steneck



Pam Wyden

John H. Costello

Ann Fair

Chris Sch

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